



United States Department of Agriculture



Forest Service

Hiawatha National
Forest



PRESERVATION 50

Fifty Years of Historic Preservation

The Hiawatha National Forest includes two units in Michigan's Upper Peninsula that initially existed as two separate National Forests; the Marquette National Forest (East Unit) established in 1913, and the Hiawatha National Forest (West Unit) established in 1931. In 1990 congress designated the Grand Island National Recreation Area to be managed by the Hiawatha National Forest.



Historicorps staff and volunteers work to restore the Mather-Klauer Lodge, 2015



Front of Mather Lodge after restoration work, 2015

Grand Island has been occupied for at least 4,200 years. The island was purchased in 1900 by the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company (CCI) and managed as a resort and game preserve. In 1901 the owner and CEO of the company, William Mather, had a personal residence built on the western shore of the island. The lodge was built from hemlock trees harvested on the island. The lodge would change ownership several times until it was finally purchased by the federal government in 2012.

Partnering with Historicorps, the Hiawatha National Forest began restoration work on the Mather-Klauer lodge in 2015 by replacing rotten sill logs, rebuilding the chimneys, and repairing the windows and facade. Restoration work will continue in 2017 with the replacement of the roof. This project has been funded through a combination of private donations and federal funds in support of the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act.